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Environment and sustainable development

Report of the Second Committee*

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I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 95 (see A/55/582, para. 2). Action on the item as a whole was taken at the 21st, 22nd, 24th and 34th meetings, from 23 to 25 October and on 15 November 2000. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/55/SR.21, 22, 24 and 34).

II. Consideration of proposals

A. Draft resolutions A/C.2/55/L.6 and A/C.2/55/L.33

2. At the 22nd meeting, on 24 October, the representative of Tajikistan, on behalf of Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, the Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Georgia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, the Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Mexico,

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Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Suriname, Swaziland, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen and Zimbabwe, introduced a draft resolution entitled "International year of freshwater, 2003" (A/C.2/55/L.6). Subsequently, Nigeria joined in sponsoring the draft resolution, which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* provisions of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 adopted at its nineteenth session and decisions of the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Sustainable Development related to freshwater,

"*Recalling also* Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/67 of 25 July 1980 on international years and anniversaries, in which the Council recognized the contribution that the celebration of international years could make to the furtherance of international cooperation and understanding,

"*Recalling further* its resolution 53/199 of 15 December 1998 on proclamation of international years,

"*Taking note* of the ongoing work in the United Nations system, as well as by other intergovernmental organizations and major groups on freshwater,

"1. *Proclaims* the year 2003 as the International Year of Freshwater;

"2. *Invites* the Subcommittee on Freshwater Resources of the Administrative Committee on Coordination to serve as the coordinating entity for the Year and to develop preliminary proposals on possible activities that could take place at the national, regional and international levels, in particular in the United Nations system, in preparation for and during the Year for consideration by the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session;

"3. *Further invites* the Subcommittee, in carrying out the tasks outlined above, to take into account preparations for the forthcoming ten-year review of progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 and other outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development;

"4. *Calls upon* Member States, national and international organizations, major groups and the private sector to make voluntary contributions in accordance with the guidelines for international years and anniversaries and to lend other forms of support to the International Year of Freshwater;

"5. *Encourages* all Member States, the United Nations system and all other actors to take advantage of the International Year of Freshwater to increase awareness of the importance of freshwater and to promote action at the local, national, regional and international levels;

"6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session a progress report on the preparations for the International Year of Freshwater."

3. At the 34th meeting, on 15 November, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Navid Hanif (Pakistan), introduced and orally corrected a draft resolution entitled "International Year of Freshwater, 2003" (A/C.2/55/L.33), which he submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.6.

4. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.33 (see para. 16, draft resolution I).

5. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.33, draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.6 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

B. Draft resolutions A/C.2/55/L.9 and A/C.2/55/L.27

6. At the 21st meeting, on 23 October, the representative of Nigeria, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China and Mexico, introduced a draft resolution entitled "International cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon" (A/C.2/55/L.9). Subsequently, Norway joined in sponsoring the draft resolution, which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* its resolutions 52/200 of 18 December 1997, 53/185 of 15 December 1998 and 54/220 of 22 December 1999, and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1999/46 of 28 July 1999, 1999/63 of 30 July 1999 and 2000/33 of 28 July 2000,

"*Having considered* the report of the Secretary-General on international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon,

"*Reaffirming* the importance of international cooperation for a better scientific understanding of the El Niño phenomenon, and that international cooperation and solidarity with the affected countries are indispensable,

"1. *Notes with appreciation* the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General;

"2. *Also notes with appreciation* the measures adopted in order to ensure the continuity of international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon, within the framework of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and reiterates the invitation of the General Assembly to Member States, organizations and organs of the United Nations system contained in paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 of its resolution 52/200;

"3. *Welcomes* the establishment of the working group on the El Niño/La Niña phenomenon within the framework of the Inter-Agency Task Force of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction;

"4. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General and the relevant United Nations organs, funds and programmes, in particular those taking part in the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and the international community to adopt, as appropriate, the necessary measures for the prompt establishment

of the international centre for the study of the El Niño phenomenon in Guayaquil, Ecuador, and urges the international community to provide scientific, technical and financial assistance and cooperation for that purpose, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 54/220 and Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/33;

"5. *Encourages* the Government of the host country to continue facilitating the process for the prompt establishment of the international centre for the study of the El Niño phenomenon;

"6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue the full implementation of its resolutions 52/200, 53/185, 54/219 of 22 December 1999 and 54/220 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1999/46, 1999/63 and 2000/33;

"7. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2001, on the implementation of the present resolution, under the agenda item 'Environment and sustainable development'."

7. At the 34th meeting, on 15 November, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Navid Hanif (Pakistan), introduced a draft resolution entitled "International cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon" (A/C.2/55/L.27), which he submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.9.

8. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.27 (see para. 16, draft resolution II).

9. After the adoption of the draft resolution, the representative of Ecuador made a statement (see A/C.2/55/SR.34).

10. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.27, draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.9 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

C. Draft resolutions A/C.2/55/L.11 and A/C.2/55/L.26

11. At the 24th meeting, on 25 October, the representative of the Russian Federation, on behalf of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, subsequently joined by Greece, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway and the United States of America, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Enhancing complementarities among international instruments related to environment and sustainable development" (A/C.2/55/L.11), which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 adopted at its nineteenth special session,

"*Recalling also* its resolutions 53/186 of 15 December 1998 on international institutional arrangements related to environment and development, 53/242 of 28 July 1999 on the report of the Secretary-General on

environment and human settlements, and 54/217 of 22 December 1999 on enhancing complementarities among international instruments related to environment and sustainable development,

"*Reaffirming* the need, as stipulated in the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, for greater coherence in various intergovernmental organizations and processes by means of better policy coordination at the intergovernmental level, as well as for continued and more concerted efforts to enhance collaboration among the secretariats of relevant decision-making bodies,

"*Emphasizing* the need for environmental conventions to continue to pursue sustainable development objectives that are consistent with their provisions and to be fully responsive to Agenda 21,

"1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General;

"2. *Welcomes* the work undertaken by the secretariats of the instruments related to environment and sustainable development and other relevant organizations to implement resolution 54/217;

"3. *Encourages* the conferences of the parties to and the permanent secretariats of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, and other international instruments related to environment and sustainable development, as well as relevant organizations, especially the United Nations Environment Programme, and through the environmental management group, to continue their work for enhancing complementarities among them with full respect for the status of the secretariats of the conventions and the autonomous decision-making prerogatives of the conferences of the parties to the conventions concerned, and to strengthen cooperation with a view to facilitating progress in the implementation of those conventions at the international, regional and national levels;

"4. *Encourages also* the conferences of the parties to and the permanent secretariats of the relevant instruments related to environment and sustainable development to promote further the complementarities among them, inter alia, through coordination of the timing of their sessions and the sessions of their subsidiary bodies, taking into account the organization of work of the General Assembly;

"5. *Invites* the permanent secretariats of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, and other relevant international organizations to provide further information on their work to implement resolution 54/217 and other complementary activities in their contributions to the preparatory process of the review of the implementation of Agenda 21 to be carried out in 2002;

"6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take into account the above work in the preparation of documentation and other preparatory activities for the review of the implementation of Agenda 21 to be carried out in 2002."

12. At the 34th meeting, on 15 November, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Navid Hanif (Pakistan), introduced a draft resolution entitled "Enhancing complementarities among international instruments relating to environment and sustainable development" (A/C.2/55/L.26), which he submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.11.

13. Before the adoption of the draft resolution, the representative of the Russian Federation made a statement (see A/C.2/55/SR.34).

14. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.26 (see para. 16, draft resolution III).

15. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.26, draft resolution A/C.2/55/L.11 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. Recommendations of the Second Committee

16. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

Draft resolution I
International Year of Freshwater, 2003

The General Assembly,

Recalling the provisions of Agenda 21,[1] the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21[2] adopted at its nineteenth special session, and decisions of the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Sustainable Development at its sixth session[3] relating to freshwater,

Recalling also Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/67 of 25 July 1980 on international years and anniversaries, in which the Council recognized the contribution that the celebration of international years could make to the furtherance of international cooperation and understanding,

Recalling further its resolution 53/199 of 15 December 1998 on the proclamation of international years,

Noting the ongoing work in the United Nations system and the work of other intergovernmental organizations on freshwater,

1. *Proclaims* the year 2003 as the International Year of Freshwater;

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[1] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

[2] Resolution S-19/2, annex.

[3] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1998, Supplement No. 9* (E/1998/29).

2. *Invites* the Subcommittee on Water Resources of the Administrative Committee on Coordination to serve as the coordinating entity for the Year and to develop relevant preliminary proposals for consideration by the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session on possible activities, including, inter alia, possible sources of funding, that could take place at all levels, as appropriate;

3. *Calls upon* Member States, national and international organizations, major groups and the private sector to make voluntary contributions in accordance with the guidelines for international years and anniversaries;

4. *Encourages* all Member States, the United Nations system and all other actors to take advantage of the International Year of Freshwater to increase awareness of the importance of freshwater and to promote action at the local, national, regional and international levels;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session a progress report on the preparations for the International Year of Freshwater.

Draft resolution II
International cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 52/200 of 18 December 1997, 53/185 of 15 December 1998 and 54/220 of 22 December 1999, and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1999/46 of 28 July 1999, 1999/63 of 30 July 1999 and 2000/33 of 28 July 2000,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon,[4]

Reaffirming the importance of international cooperation for a better scientific understanding of the El Niño phenomenon, and that international cooperation and solidarity with the affected countries are indispensable,

Reaffirming also the importance of developing strategies at the national, subregional, regional and international levels that aim to prevent, mitigate and rehabilitate the damage caused by natural disasters resulting from the El Niño phenomenon,

1. *Notes with appreciation* the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General;[4]

2. *Also notes with appreciation* the measures adopted in order to ensure the continuity of international cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon, within the framework of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and reiterates its invitation to Member States, organs and organizations of the United Nations system contained in paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 of its resolution 52/200;

[4] A/55/99-E/2000/86.

3. *Welcomes* the establishment of the working group on the El Niño/La Niña phenomenon within the framework of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction;

4. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General and the relevant United Nations organs, funds and programmes, in particular those taking part in the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and the international community to adopt, as appropriate, the necessary measures for the prompt establishment of the international centre for the study of the El Niño phenomenon at Guayaquil, Ecuador, and invites the international community to provide scientific, technical and financial assistance and cooperation for that purpose, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 54/220;

5. *Invites* the Government of the host country to facilitate the process for the prompt establishment of the international centre for the study of the El Niño phenomenon;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue the full implementation of General Assembly resolutions 52/200, 53/185, 54/219 and 54/220 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1999/46, 1999/63 and 2000/33;

7. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2001, on the implementation of the present resolution, under the item entitled "Environment and sustainable development".

Draft resolution III
Enhancing complementarities among international instruments relating to environment and sustainable development

The General Assembly,

Recalling Agenda 21[5] and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21[6] adopted at its nineteenth special session, and its resolutions 53/186 of 15 December 1998, 53/242 of 28 July 1999 and 54/217 of 22 December 1999,

Reaffirming the need, as stipulated in the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, for greater coherence in various intergovernmental organizations and processes by means of better policy coordination at the intergovernmental level, as well as for continued and more concerted efforts to enhance collaboration among the secretariats of relevant decision-making bodies, within their respective mandates,

Emphasizing the need for the conferences of the parties and the permanent secretariats of the environmental conventions to continue to pursue sustainable development objectives that are consistent with those conventions and with Agenda 21,

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[5] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

[6] Resolution S-19/2, annex.

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;[7]

2. *Welcomes* the work undertaken by the secretariats of the instruments relating to environment and sustainable development and other relevant organizations to implement resolution 54/217;

3. *Encourages* the conferences of the parties to and the permanent secretariats of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[8] the Convention on Biological Diversity[9] and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa,[10] and other international instruments relating to environment and sustainable development, as well as relevant organizations, especially the United Nations Environment Programme, including, as appropriate, the involvement of the environmental management group, to continue their work for enhancing complementarities among them with full respect for the status of the secretariats of the conventions and the autonomous decision-making prerogatives of the conferences of the parties to the conventions concerned, and to strengthen cooperation with a view to facilitating progress in the implementation of those conventions at the international, regional and national levels and to report thereon to their respective conferences of the parties;

4. *Encourages* the conferences of the parties, assisted by their permanent secretariats, to coordinate the timing of their sessions and the sessions of their subsidiary bodies, taking into account the organization of work of the General Assembly and the Commission on Sustainable Development;

5. *Also encourages* the conferences of the parties to promote the streamlining of national reporting;

6. *Invites* the permanent secretariats of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, and other international instruments relating to environment and sustainable development, as well as relevant organizations, to provide further information on their work to implement resolution 54/217 and other complementary activities in their contributions to the preparatory process for the review of the implementation of Agenda 21 to be carried out in 2002;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take into account the above-mentioned work in the preparation of documentation and other preparatory activities for the review of the implementation of Agenda 21 to be carried out in 2002.

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[7] A/55/357.

[8] A/AC.237/18 (Part II)/Add.1 and Corr.1, annex I.

[9] See United Nations Environment Programme, *Convention on Biological Diversity* (Environmental Law and Institution Programme Activity Centre), June 1992.

[10] A/49/84/Add.2, annex, appendix II.